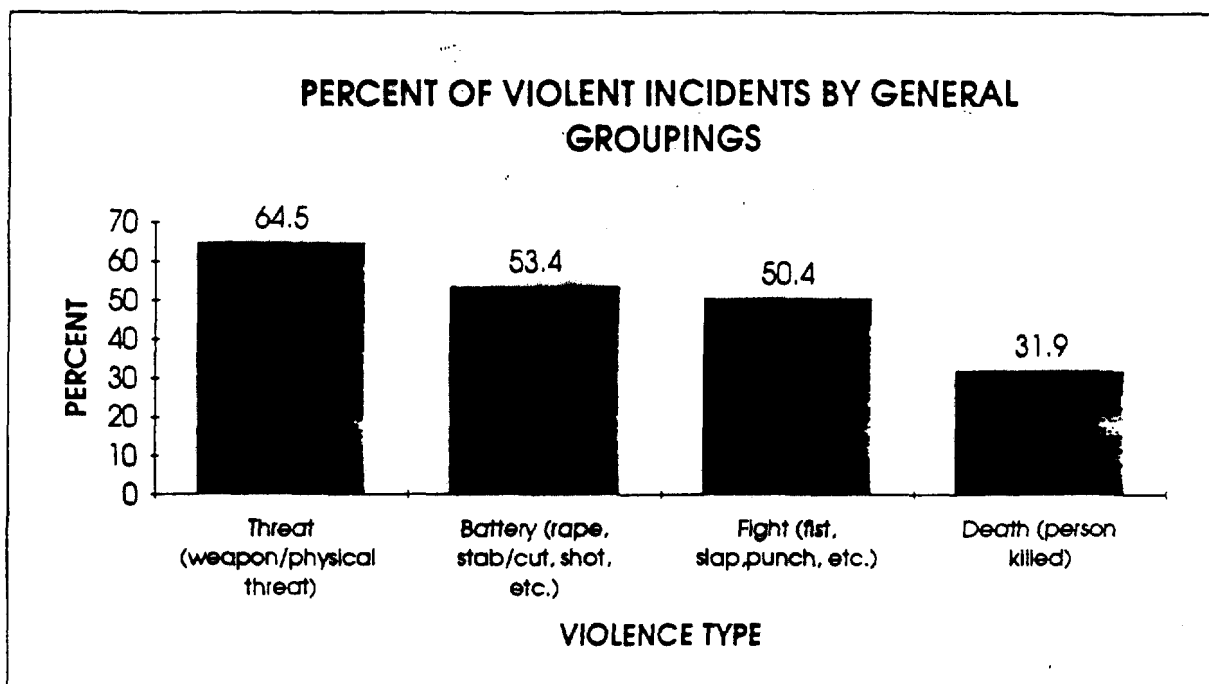


**PERCENT OF VIOLENT INCIDENTS BY SURVEY
CATEGORY**

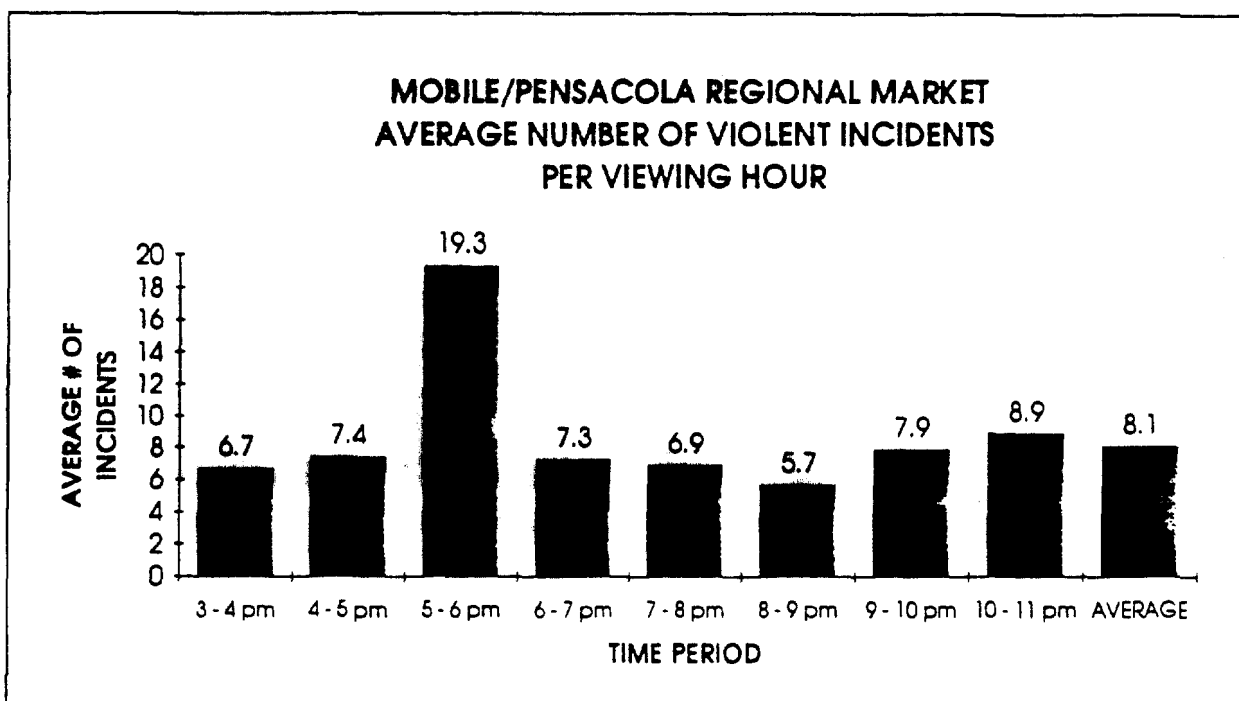
VIOLENCE TYPE	% CASES WITH OCCURRENCE
Serious verbal or physical threat	51.6
Slap or punch	43.9
Threat with weapon	37.7
Person killed	31.9
Gunplay/shoot-out	25.6
Strike with weapon	23.5
Unarmed person shot	18.5
Fist fight	18.5
Stab or cut with sharp object/knife	11.8
Rape/sexual assault	6.3
Other Violence *	57.0

* includes actions/behaviors interpreted by viewers as violence and is subject to bias



PERCENT OF VIOLENT INCIDENTS BY GENERAL GROUPINGS

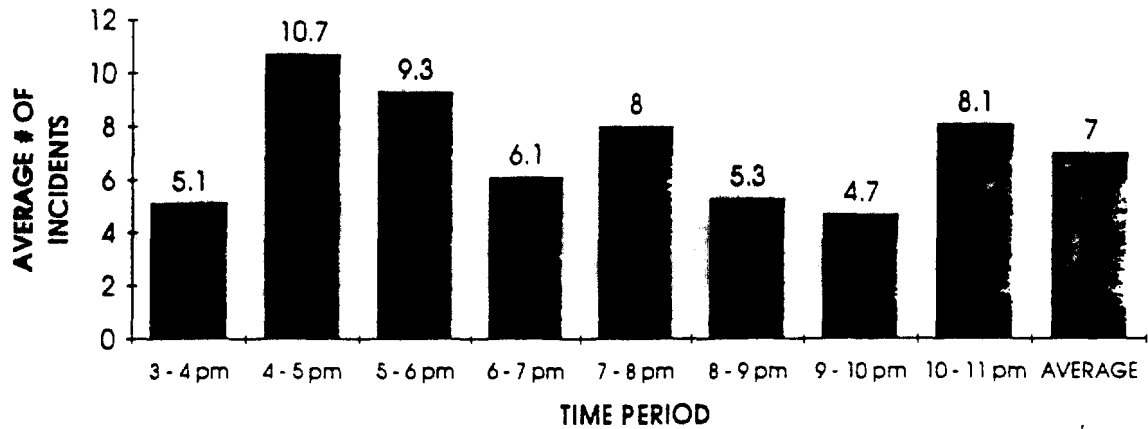
VIOLENCE TYPE	% CASES WITH OCCURRENCE
Threat (weapon threat and serious/physical threat)	64.5
Battery (rape, stab/cut, gunplay, unarmed person shot, strike with weapon)	53.4
Fight (fist fight and slap or punch)	50.4
Death (person killed)	31.9



**MOBILE/PENSACOLA REGIONAL MARKET
AVERAGE NUMBER OF VIOLENT INCIDENTS
PER VIEWING HOUR**

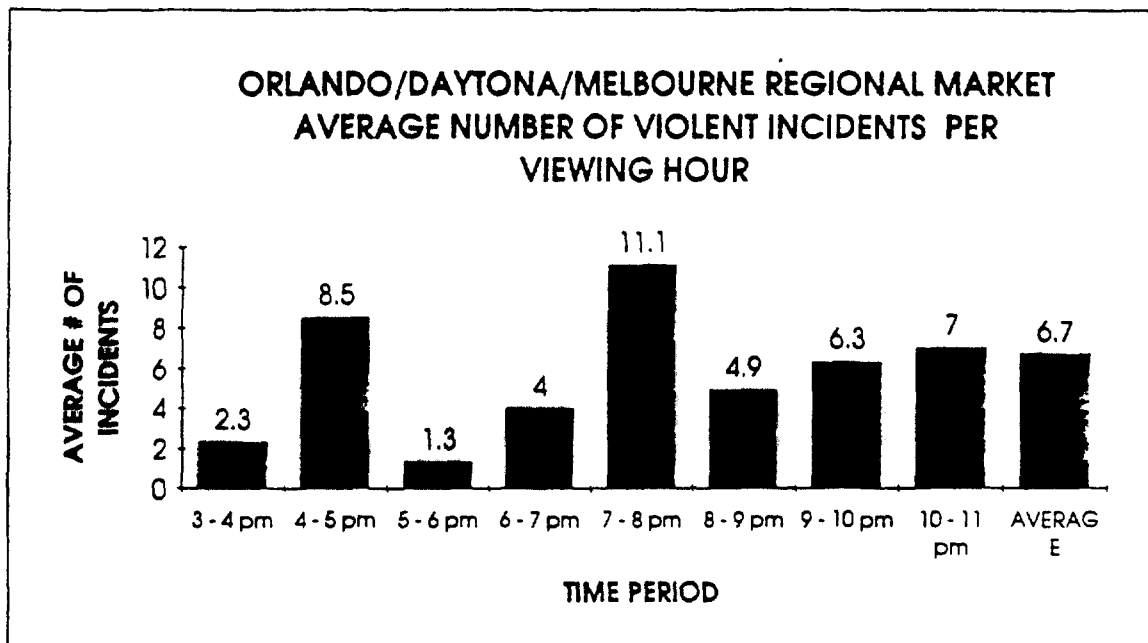
VIEWING TIME PERIOD	AVERAGE # OF INCIDENTS
3:00 - 4:00 pm	6.7
4:00 - 5:00 pm	7.4
5:00 - 6:00 pm	19.3
6:00 - 7:00 pm	7.3
7:00 - 8:00 pm	6.9
8:00 - 9:00 pm	5.7
9:00 - 10:00 pm	7.9
10:00 - 11:00 pm	8.9
AVERAGE	8.1

**JACKSONVILLE REGIONAL MARKET
AVERAGE NUMBER OF VIOLENT INCIDENTS
PER VIEWING HOUR**



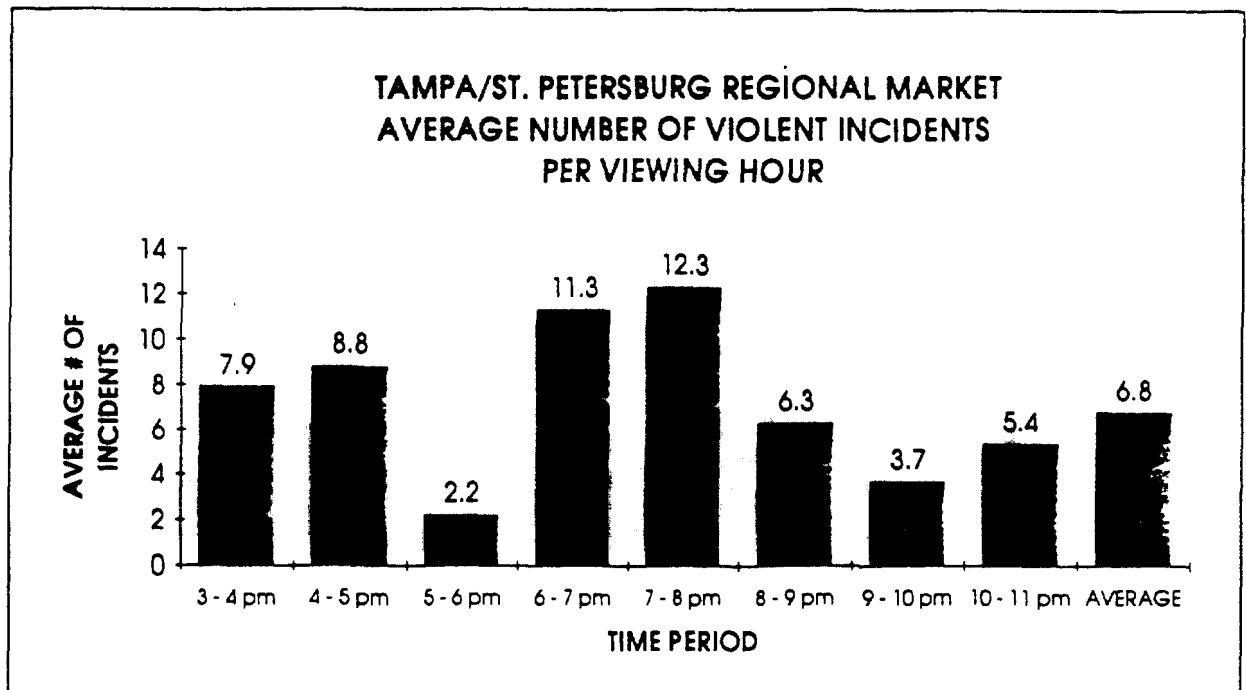
**JACKSONVILLE REGIONAL MARKET
AVERAGE NUMBER OF VIOLENT INCIDENTS
PER VIEWING HOUR**

VIEWING TIME PERIOD	AVERAGE # OF INCIDENTS
3:00 - 4:00 pm	5.1
4:00 - 5:00 pm	10.7
5:00 - 6:00 pm	9.3
6:00 - 7:00 pm	6.1
7:00 - 8:00 pm	8.0
8:00 - 9:00 pm	5.3
9:00 - 10:00 pm	4.7
10:00 - 11:00 pm	8.1
AVERAGE	7.0



**ORLANDO/DAYTONA/MELBOURNE REGIONAL MARKET
AVERAGE NUMBER OF VIOLENT INCIDENTS
PER VIEWING HOUR**

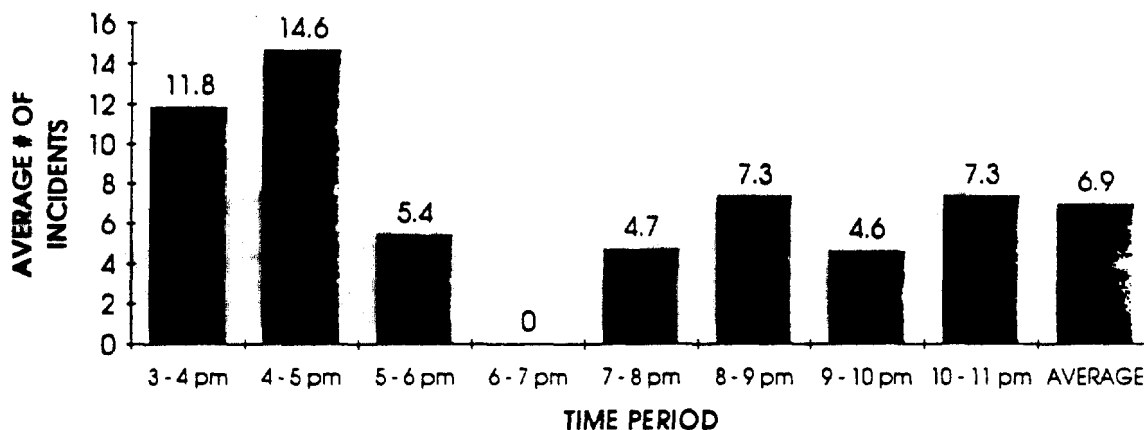
VIEWING TIME PERIOD	AVERAGE # OF INCIDENTS
3:00 - 4:00 pm	2.3
4:00 - 5:00 pm	8.5
5:00 - 6:00 pm	1.3
6:00 - 7:00 pm	4.0
7:00 - 8:00 pm	11.1
8:00 - 9:00 pm	4.9
9:00 - 10:00 pm	6.3
10:00 - 11:00 pm	7.0
AVERAGE	6.7



**TAMPA/ST. PETERSBURG REGIONAL MARKET
AVERAGE NUMBER OF VIOLENT INCIDENTS
PER VIEWING HOUR**

VIEWING TIME PERIOD	AVERAGE # OF INCIDENTS
3:00 - 4:00 pm	7.9
4:00 - 5:00 pm	8.8
5:00 - 6:00 pm	2.2
6:00 - 7:00 pm	11.3
7:00 - 8:00 pm	12.3
8:00 - 9:00 pm	6.3
9:00 - 10:00 pm	3.7
10:00 - 11:00 pm	5.4
AVERAGE	6.8

**WEST PALM/VERO BEACH REGIONAL MARKET
AVERAGE NUMBER OF VIOLENT INCIDENTS
PER VIEWING HOUR**

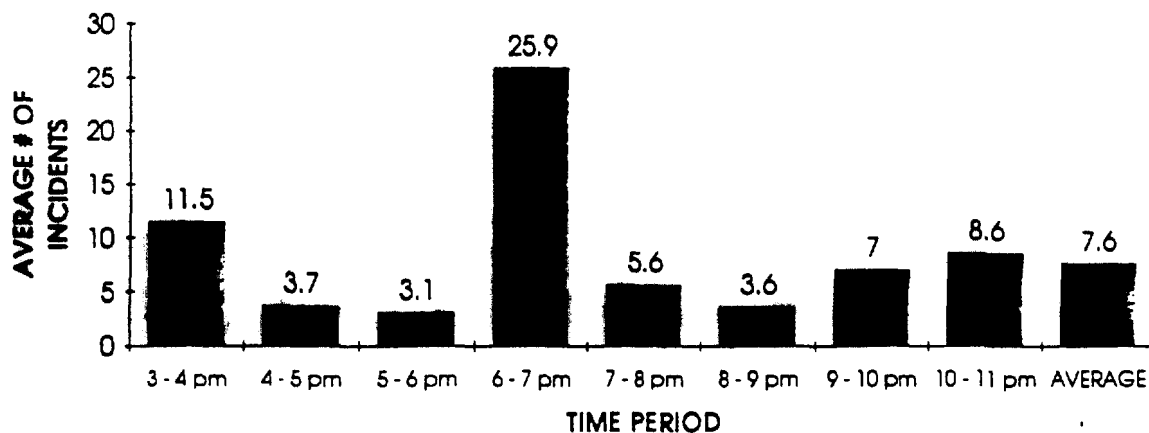


* 6-7 time slot having only 2 respondents.

**WEST PALM/VERO BEACH REGIONAL MARKET
AVERAGE NUMBER OF VIOLENT INCIDENTS
PER VIEWING HOUR**

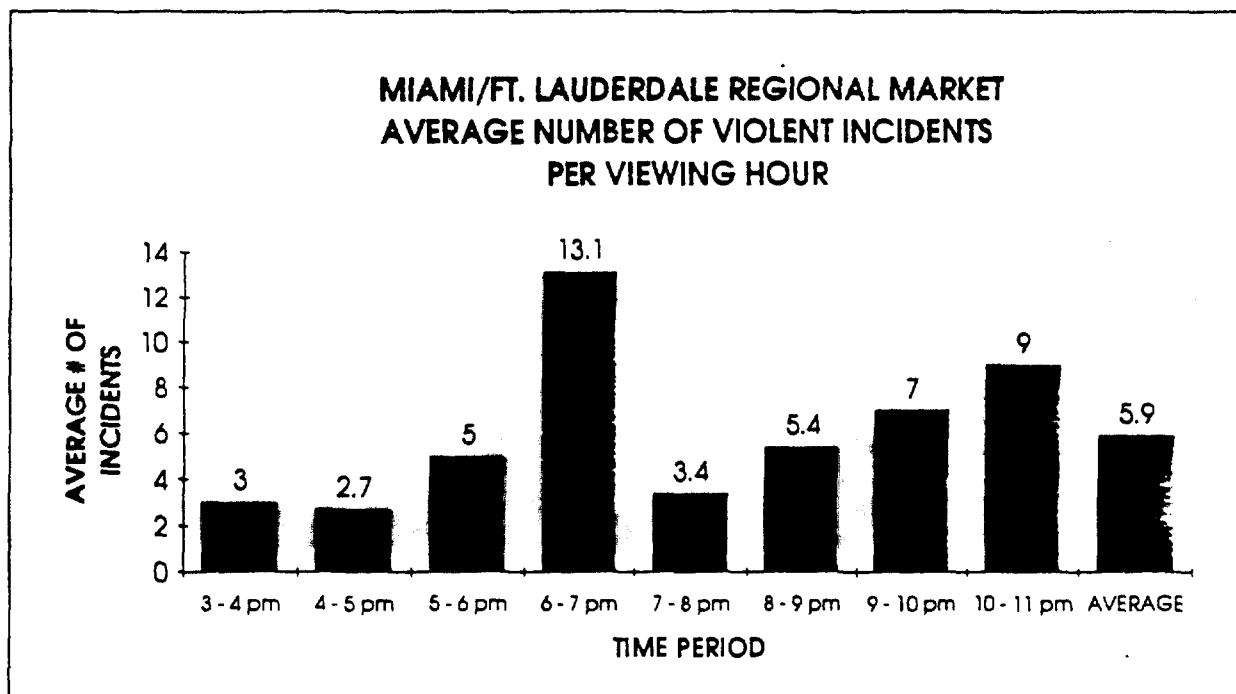
VIEWING TIME PERIOD	AVERAGE # OF INCIDENTS
3:00 - 4:00 pm	11.8
4:00 - 5:00 pm	14.6
5:00 - 6:00 pm	5.4
6:00 - 7:00 pm	0
7:00 - 8:00 pm	4.7
8:00 - 9:00 pm	7.3
9:00 - 10:00 pm	4.6
10:00 - 11:00 pm	7.3
AVERAGE	6.9

**FORT MYERS/NAPLES REGIONAL MARKET
AVERAGE NUMBER OF VIOLENT INCIDENTS
PER VIEWING HOUR**



**FORT MYERS/NAPLES REGIONAL MARKET
AVERAGE NUMBER OF VIOLENT INCIDENTS
PER VIEWING HOUR**

VIEWING TIME PERIOD	AVERAGE # OF INCIDENTS
3:00 - 4:00 pm	11.5
4:00 - 5:00 pm	3.7
5:00 - 6:00 pm	3.1
6:00 - 7:00 pm	25.9
7:00 - 8:00 pm	5.6
8:00 - 9:00 pm	3.6
9:00 - 10:00 pm	7.0
10:00 - 11:00 pm	8.6
AVERAGE	7.6



**MIAMI/FT. LAUDERDALE REGIONAL MARKET
AVERAGE NUMBER OF VIOLENT INCIDENTS
PER VIEWING HOUR**

VIEWING TIME PERIOD	AVERAGE # OF INCIDENTS
3:00 - 4:00 pm	3.0
4:00 - 5:00 pm	2.7
5:00 - 6:00 pm	5.0
6:00 - 7:00 pm	13.1
7:00 - 8:00 pm	3.4
8:00 - 9:00 pm	5.4
9:00 - 10:00 pm	7.0
10:00 - 11:00 pm	9.0
AVERAGE	5.9

FLORIDA PTA TELEVISION VIOLENCE RATING SHEET

Complete the following information to rate one of your child's television programs for violence.

Name of Program _____ Date _____ Time _____

Station Viewed _____ City _____ Network _____ or Local Program _____

Length of Program: 30 min _____ one hr _____ two hrs _____ Animated yes _____ no _____

Program Target Audience: Children _____ Teenagers _____ Adults _____ General _____

Violence Rating Table

For each type of violence that you observe during the television program, place a mark in the middle column each time it occurs. On the last row, mark each time a person is killed even though you have already marked the type of violence that occurred. Total the number of incidents in the column on the far right.

Type of Violence	Number of Incidents	Total
Serious Verbal or Physical Threat		
Threat With Weapon		
Unwanted Sexual Touching		
Verbal Sexual Harassment		
Rape/Sexual Assault		
Slap or Punch		
Fist Fight		
Strike with Weapon		
Stab or Cut with sharp object or knife		
Gunplay/Shoot-out		
Unarmed Person Shot		
Other Types of Violence		
Mark each time a person is killed		

July 15, 1995

RECEIVED

NOV 7 1995

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

Mr. Roy Stewart
Chief, Mass Media Bureau
Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary
1919 M Street, N.W.
Washington D.C. 20554

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

Dear Mr. Stewart,

Congresswoman Louise M. Slaughter contacted your office on my behalf, (8310-MA CN9502551), regarding my interest in serving as an evaluator of educational programming as part of the FCC's study in this field.

I reviewed the issues addressed in MM Docket 93-48. I would like to make some brief comments if I may.

•First, all television is educational; whether it be NOVA or MTV. The question is, what does it teach, and does the young viewer have the critical viewing skills to analyze and interpret the messages seen and heard?.

•Second, the first amendment issues are critical to the debate regarding the amount and type of educational programming offered for children's consumption. The FCC must take care that in their axiomatic efforts to adequately address the educational need of the child viewer, their zeal does not infringe on the first amendment rights of the broadcasters.

•Third, there is no doubt America significantly lags behind other nations, (England, Germany, Japan) in the type and amount of educational programming provided to their youthful viewers. For a more detailed account of this issue, I suggest Edward L. Palmer's book: "Television and America's Children; A Crisis of Neglect". Yet with the proliferation of cable and satellite broadcasts, we may be beginning to make inroads in addressing this concern.

•Finally, this past week, both President Clinton and Vice-President Gore, in addressing the Conference on Family and Media, in Nashville, Tennessee, stressed the need for parents to take an active role in monitoring their children's interaction with media.

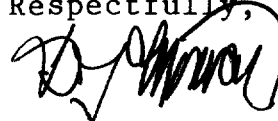
It is to this end, I feel I am qualified to propose a potential strategy to this perplexing issue. Over the past several years I have been actively involved in the media literacy movement in America. I firmly believe an integrated media education program, supported by both the FCC and the Education Department, will empower both parents and children alike, with skills which allow them to develop a critical autonomy in their relationship with media.

This fall I will be embarking on a doctoral program at the University of Rochester's Warner Graduate School of Education and Human Development. The focus of my program will be to study the impact of media on the educational development of children, and to initiate and develop educational strategies and pedagogy which facilitate greater awareness of media impact.

I have taken the liberty of including my curriculum vitae and some recently published articles I have written. As you proceed with your study, I would like to be considered as a regional evaluator of educational programming.

I look forward to your reply. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Moriarty', written over a horizontal line.

Dennis J. Moriarty
1760 West Bloomfield Rd.
Honeoye Falls, N.Y. 14472
716-624-9334

CURRICULUM VITAE

Dennis J. Moriarty

ADDRESS

1760 West Bloomfield Road
Honeoye Falls, New York 14642
U.S.A.
(716) 624-9334

EXPERIENCE

- 1995** *Consultant/Trainer.* Cable in the Classroom, National Cable Television Association, National Parent/Teacher Association, "*Taking Charge of Your TV.*"
- 1994** *Media Education Consultant.* New York State Division for Youth. Assisted in developing Leisure/media Literacy curriculum; trained staff in media literacy concepts and pedagogy.
- 1993** *Consultant.* Greater Rochester Cablevision. Distance Learning Representative, *Montage 93'.*
- 1993-94** *Development Consultant.* Mental Health Coalition, Rochester, New York. Facilitated educational programming; coordinated community relations; increased membership by 90%; formulated funding strategies.
- 1974-93** *Speech Language Therapist.* Boston, Massachusetts and Rochester, New York. Provided communication development services to children and youth K-12; made available support services for parents and families.
- 1995** *Consultant.* Center for the Research on the Effects of Television, Department of Psychology, Ithaca College, Ithaca, New York
- 1995** *Consultant.* Rochester City School District, SETRC, Media Education, Rochester, New York.

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

- 1995** *Adjunct Faculty.* *Mass Media.* Monroe Community College, Rochester, New York, Communication Department.
- 1995** *Adjunct Faculty.* *Media Education.* SUNY Brockport, Visual Studies Workshop, Rochester, New York.
- 1994-95** *Adjunct Faculty.* *Media Literacy and Values Education.* University of Rochester, Warner Graduate School of Education and Human Development, Office of Professional Development.

PUBLICATIONS

- Moriarty, DJ, "Bringing Media Literacy Home" *Better Viewing: Family guide to Television*, May/June, 1995.
- Moriarty, DJ, "Media Literacy - A Skill for Life; Juvenile Offenders Participate in Innovative Psycho Educational Program" *Telemedium, The Journal of Media Literacy*, Spring 1995.

Moriarty, DJ, "Media Literacy: Oxymoron Not!" *Rochesterian Magazine*, May 1994.
Moriarty, DJ, "Understanding the Media" *Dad Magazine*, Vol 1, Issue 3, Nov/Dec 94.

EDUCATION

- 1995 Certificate, Institute on Media Literacy and Education, New York University, Graduate School of Education.
- 1994 Certificate, Institute on Media Education, Harvard University, Graduate School of Education.
- 1979 Master of Arts - Goddard College, Plainfield, Vermont, (Focus: Arts and Social Change)
- 1972-74 School for the Study of Disorders of Human Communication, University College, University of London, College of Speech Therapists, London, England.

AFFILIATIONS AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION

- Center for Media Literacy
- President, Friends of Oatka New York State Division for Youth Advisory Board
- National Telemedia Council
- WHEC-TV10 (NBC) Community Advisory Board, Rochester, New York
- Honeoye Falls/Lima (New York) School District Technology Committee
- WXXI-TV 21 (PBS) Sesame Street PEP Task Force, trainer of trainers, Rochester, New York
- Board of Directors - Child Vision
- Rochester Interactive Multimedia Task Force
- Chair, Media Action Committee Task Force to Reduce Violence
- Town of Mendon (New York) Cable Commission

SKILLS

- | | |
|---|---|
| ● Computer skills | ● Successful in motivating colleagues and staff, and promoting teamwork |
| ● Interpersonal communication skills | ● Extensive, experience, and expertise in developing and implementing innovative programs |
| ● Frequent contributor to radio and television public affairs programming | |



TELEMEDIUM

Spring 1995

Volume 41, Number 1

The Journal of Media Literacy

The Role of the Family in Developing Media Literacy

by Richard Fehlman

- A Personal Story

Editor's Note: Teaching our youth the skills and meanings of media literacy is a challenge and an opportunity that is being taken up by more and more teachers across the land. It is an essential and exciting change for education in the Information Age. But teachers cannot do it alone. With most television viewing and much other media use taking place in the home — a place as varied as the individuals and circumstances within it — what happens in the home and how these diverse families manage the media are a crucial link to our success as educators and as a society.

How can we as teachers play a role in making this connection realistic and relevant? One way to begin is to examine our own experience, to discover the process of how we came to be media educators and advocates for media literacy.

Dr. Richard Fehlman shares such a personal story. Rich is professor of English at the University of Northern Iowa, a member of NTC's Board of Directors and a parent of two. Formerly a high school English teacher, he has chaired the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) Assembly on Media Arts, edited

its newsletter, Media Matters, and in 1994 chaired the Madison conference co-sponsored by NCTE and NTC.



Rich Fehlman as a boy

Rich Fehlman's Story

Gordon Wells explains in his book *The Meaning Makers* that stories are "one of the most fundamental means of making meaning...one of the most effective ways of making one's own interpretation of events and ideas available to others." It is a means, he notes, of sharing "understandings" and bringing our "mental models of the world in closer alignment" with others (1). With

continued on page 6

President Clinton Addresses Media Influences

Twice during his January State of the Union Address, President Clinton made reference to the powerful presence of the media in the lives of the nation. Commenting on both social violence and the growth of tabloid journalism, the president clearly acknowledged the way the mass media can influence social attitudes and behavior. As NTC lays the groundwork for the National Media Literacy Conference this September, an event which already promises to be the biggest such conference ever held in this country, we welcome the president's comments as a way of continuing to focus national attention on media messages and the need to foster critical viewing, thinking and listening skills.

What Did the President Say?

"For people in the entertainment industry in this country, we welcome your creativity and your world-wide success and we support your freedom of expression. But you do have a responsibility to assess the impact of your work and to understand the danger that comes from the incessant, repetitive, mindless violence and irresponsible conduct that permeates our media all the time."

"A lot of our people don't have the time or emotional strength they think to do the work of citizenship. Most of us in politics haven't helped very much. For years we've mostly treated citizens like they were consumers, or spectators, sort of political couch potatoes who were supposed to watch the TV ads either promise them something for nothing or play on their fears and frustrations. More and more of our citizens now get most of their information in very negative or aggressive ways that is hardly conducive to honest and open conversations. The truth is that we have got to stop seeing each other as enemies just because we have different views."

In This Issue

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Up and ATOM

Strategies for Parents

Practicing What We Teach

Book Review

Teacher Idea Exchange

Media Masters TV Rap

Media Literacy On-Line

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Media Literacy and Juvenile Offenders

Juvenile Offenders in New York State Participate in Innovative Psycho-Educational Program

by Dennis J. Moriarty

Dennis Moriarty, media education consultant based in Rochester, New York, is an adjunct faculty member of the Communications Department at Monroe Community College. He teaches media literacy courses, conducts workshops, and has published articles in newspapers, magazines and other periodicals. As the media literacy consultant to the New York State Division for Youth, he has championed the importance of "reaching young people where their thinking is" and spearheaded the media literacy project for young offenders which he describes below.

In the summer of 1994 the New York State Division for Youth, Independent Living Skills program introduced Media Literacy as one of its teaching modules.

The Division for Youth oversees a network of residential facilities, group homes, evening reporting centers, foster care placements and various youth service initiatives. Over 2500 youngsters across New York State receive services through DFY programs. Most of these youths are between 13-17 years old and are referred to the Division as Juvenile Delinquents through the Juvenile Justice System. Many have histories of truancy and aggressive behavior. And a significant number of this group have reported spending more than five hours a day watching television and/or playing video games.

Preventing Delinquency

The mission of the Division for Youth is "preventing delinquency through positive youth development". Curricula that integrate life and basic academic skills are implemented through the Independent Living Skills program and are carried out by combining group and individual instruction. Mindful of the well-known statistics that report a vast amount of time spent exposed to the media (1) and that link the

long-term viewing of violent content to aggressive behavior (2), DFY created a Leisure/Media Literacy curriculum.

The curriculum's objectives include learning how to plan leisure time activities and developing a basic awareness of the media in its various forms: specific skills include the ability to identify newspapers, radio, television, billboards, video games, etc.

It is not the intent of this article to address the relationship between media and violence. Rather, it is intended to demonstrate

"We're the media generation. This is something we know, something we can talk about."

A teenage workshop participant

how media literacy as a life skill transcends classrooms and extends into living rooms across America or to wherever media and humans interface.

Prior to the initiation of the program, Independent Living Skills instructors participated in a six hour training workshop on Media Literacy, conducted by a trained Media Education Consultant. The workshop focused on the definition, basic concepts, and principles of Media Literacy. The instructors were able to discuss how best to implement the program at their respective locations. They viewed instructional videos and were able to review and discuss the

Division for Youth's Leisure/Media Literacy Curriculum. It was made clear to them that although the program was presented as a curriculum it was in reality a process which they could implement across their specific curriculum.

Before the program was formally initiated all the young participants in the program were given a pretest to determine their current level of leisure/media literacy knowledge. Following completion of the module, they were given a post-test. It should be stressed that the expected level of knowledge was very elementary.

The Project

For six weeks between July and August the young participants received between 3-4 hours per week of leisure/media literacy instruction. They addressed issues such as cost of leisure activities, how to plan leisure activities, understanding advertising techniques, components of television viewing violence in media, celebrity endorsement forms of tabloid media, values, diversity and gender images.

Choices of methodology varied from facility to facility. Some programs addressed the objectives on site while others include field trips to observe various media entities such as newspapers, radio and television stations, magazines, etc. Some innovative instructors chose to present media literacy as a parenting skill.

continued on page

(1) It has been well documented in many studies that by the time they reach age 18, today's youth will have spent almost twice as much time exposed to media than formal academic instruction.

(2) The American Academy of Pediatrics has stated that long term television viewing is a cause of violent and aggressive behavior.

continued from page 12

Teacher Assessment

Once a module was finished instructors were asked to complete an evaluation form. The questions that received the greatest response were: What did you like about conducting this module? And, what curriculum related problems did you encounter?

Some concerns mentioned were the need for more instructional materials and videos; participants not taking the module seriously; the need for bi-lingual material; and too little time to cover material.

Favorable comments included "the kids were able to explore careers in the media field"; "they were able to meet people who worked at radio and television stations"; "a great learning experience for residents as well as staff"; "Kids very receptive to this approach"; "Increased understanding of media impact"; "Easy for the students to feel part of the program and express their opinions and ideas"; "Awareness of violence in the media"; "Stimulating"; "relevant"; "topical"; and finally a comment which expresses how many media educators feel, "The students liked doing it and it was fun to teach."

And for the Future...

This past December Independent Living Skills instructors from across New York State convened in Albany for their annual conference. The general session addressed "Developments in Media Literacy". The presentation featured a discussion focusing on *Media and Values* and *Media and Democracy*. Most agreed these issues were crucial within the context of violence prevention.

There was general consensus that the process of Media Literacy fosters a conducive environment for participants and staff to engage in critical analysis of contemporary media. Finally, all who support media education at the Division for Youth called for more academic and programmatic training.

What does this all mean? It is much too early to draw any far-reaching conclusions from this innovative program. Generational outcomes and longitudinal studies will be necessary to empirically evaluate its long term success or failure. What is measurable is the ability of this process to increase communication. As one resident aptly stated, "We're the media generation, this is something we know, something we can talk about."

To access, analyze, evaluate and communicate. Isn't that what media literacy is all about? ■

Media Study Guides

continued from page 3

just because it is available. However, because of the quality of feature films presented to us, and the breadth of curriculum areas to support, we have declined to write guides for just three films in the last decade.

Our initial publications focused on media educators. Published during the renaissance of Australian film which also coincided with significant growth in media education here, we specialized in Australian titles. During the last 7 years or so however, we have expanded our audience. Feature films can be used in a variety of discipline areas. Recognizing this we gathered a team of writers from a range of disciplines other than Media. Our stable of writers now represents History, Geography, Science, Social Studies, Art and Legal Studies as well as Media at primary and secondary levels.

I have been asked to make some comment about my favorite guides. The 6-page color guide to *The Piano* I think stands up extremely well. I must confess that I wrote the Media section of this guide which also focuses on English and History. The film is not a particular favorite of mine but a dozen color stills supported by the text has created an excellent publication.

Beauty and the Beast provided us with a vehicle to try something different. The result is an 8-page color guide for Media, Art, and English teachers lavishly illustrated including original sketches. It is accompanied by a 4-page supplement, *The Animated Classroom*, to assist teachers to enhance their classroom programs using the skills and techniques of animation.

Of the Australian titles which might be familiar to you, *Strictly Ballroom* stands out. More technical in its approach, it features sections on dance, the structure of film, structural oppositions, myth, visual style and multiculturalism in its 6 pages and color stills.

Many at ATOM believe our latest guide, *Pinocchio*, to be the best work we have done.

Other titles include *JFK*, *The Power of One* (the study guide was released in Australia with video excerpts from the film courtesy of the distributor), *Aladdin* (a primary and secondary version), *Empire of the Sun* and *The Joy Luck Club* to name but a few.

American educators will soon be able to use our guides in their own classrooms. I will be participating in the National Media Literacy Conference in North Carolina in September where I understand that some guides will be available for your perusal. More importantly, as you would have read in *Telemedium*, a range of ATOM study guides will soon be available through NTC. ■



ATOM
AUSTRALIAN TEACHERS OF MEDIA INC.

HOME

As a family, we choose to watch television by the program, not by blocks of time. We almost look forward to commercials in order to analyze the methods they use to encourage us to buy products.

By becoming a critical-viewing family, we've assumed responsibility for evaluating the content of television and examining the role television plays in our home. As active viewers, watching television has become a family activity. For parents, teachers, and children, critical viewing is empowerment.

● For more information on *Cable in the Classroom*, see page 18.

Family and Community Critical Viewing Project

A partnership of the National Parent and Teacher Association (NPTA), the National Cable Television Association (NCTA) and *Cable in the Classroom* (CIC), The Family and Community Critical Viewing Project sponsors workshops for parents and teachers that provide comprehensive training in using critical-viewing skills to understand television violence. • The workshops engage participants in activities, discussion, and debate that explore ways to help families take control of their TVs. Workshops also demonstrate key concepts of media literacy and how to apply them to understanding media violence. Critical-viewing skills, handouts, and related activities are designed to be used by parents at home. • Workshops for parents, teachers, and community members, and training sessions for potential workshop presenters will be offered at various PTA conventions throughout the country. See chart for details. Other sessions will take place in the fall.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>PTA Convention</u>
May 5	San Francisco	Calif. State PTA (workshop only)
May 6	Savannah	Georgia State PTA (training only)
May 11-12	Provo	Utah State PTA (workshop and training)
May 17-18	Tampa	Arizona State PTA (workshop and training)
May 23	Nassau County	Nassau District PTA Meeting (workshop only)
June 10, 12	Orlando	National PTA Convention (workshop and training)

For more information, contact your state PTA office, or call *Cable in the Classroom* at 1-800-743-6386.

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Your Family Guide to Television Worth Watching

BetterViewing

SPECIAL REPORT

NON-VIOLENT TV

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and Where to
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What to Do
When Kids Do
See Violence
on TV

Reflecting All Races:
How Parents Can Fight
Prejudice

ALSO

15

Summer
Viewing Tips

MORE THAN
100
QUALITY SHOWS
FOR VIEWERS
OF ALL AGES



BRINGING MEDIA LITERACY

A father of three finds that critical-viewing skills are also essential parenting skills.

BY DENNIS MORIARTY PHOTOGRAPH BY FOREST MCMULLIN

TODAY IT SEEMS YOU CAN'T READ A NEWSPAPER OR MAGAZINE, LISTEN TO THE RADIO, or watch TV without someone raising the subject of violence. As a media educator and parent of three school-age children, I am concerned with the amount and type of violence that is shown on television, whether it's on *Power Rangers* or in *Terminator* movies. That's why I was especially interested when I recently read about a program called The Family and Community Critical Viewing Project, a series of national workshops to help parents and teachers develop critical-viewing skills to pass on to their children and students.

When I learned that the Project is a partnership of the National Parent Teachers Association, the National Cable Television Association (NCTA), and Cable in the Classroom (the educational television initiative of the cable industry), I called Cable in the Classroom to find out how I could attend a workshop. As a result, I was invited to participate in a training session. I'd like to share with you my experience and how I apply media-literacy concepts from the workshop at home with my children — Owen, 4, Meggie, 7, and Liam, 10.

The workshop was held at the Sheraton in Liverpool, N.Y., just outside of Syracuse, in a room with five large circular tables, an overhead projector, a big screen, and a TV/VCR. At precisely 8:30 a.m., facilitators Tom Lenhardt and Margie Elsborg began their presentation. After an overview of the workshop, we filled out a 10-item questionnaire about our media awareness. I was really surprised to find that only five percent of parents surveyed would refuse to let their children watch an offensive program. I was more convinced than ever that media literacy has to start at home.

The workshop is based on four primary media-literacy concepts. The first concept is, "All TV programs are constructed for specific reasons." To illustrate this point, we watched video from "reality TV" programs such as *Cops* and *Rescue 911*. As we did, we evaluated their authenticity and what kind of production techniques were used.

Afterwards, I applied what I'd learned at home. My oldest son, Liam, used to believe *Cops* was filmed by a regular person with a camcorder. I asked him to consider how they recorded sounds so clearly. He wondered. The other day he told me he was sure he saw

a microphone on one of the "perpetrators." Now I see him telling his brother and sister how they use tricks to make things look real.

THE SECOND KEY POINT, "EACH PERSON INTERPRETS programs and messages differently," debunks the common assumption that two people automatically receive the same message when they watch the same show. Our perceptions of what we see are influenced by our life experiences and environment. To demonstrate this point, we were shown a promotional clip for a recent TV movie, *Terror in the Night*. Each of the five tables was assigned a point of view—preschool, elementary school, middle school, high school, and parent. Acting in character, we described what feelings we experienced while watching, and what type of message(s) we received from the piece.

The exercise gave me a new perspective. To evaluate the appropriateness of a TV program for my own children, I now try to view it through their eyes and experiences. Sometimes I find it's more terrifying than I ever imagined, while other times it's not as bad as I thought.

The third key point, "Television violence takes many forms," illustrates how TV violence often is portrayed humorously. Is slapstick violence harmful to children? To help us decide, we watched some scenes from the film, *Home Alone*. Personally, I had to stifle a chuckle or two at times during the clips and I'm sure that I heard others laugh.

Then half of the group was assigned to take the position that slapstick violence was *not* harmful, the other half took the position that it was harmful. The first group

argued that it's only a movie and so outrageous no one would actually try to do the things. They also said that no normal 11-year-old could contrive those situations. The second group countered that it might encourage youngsters to try to duplicate scenes, and that slapstick doesn't show all the consequences of violent incidents.

Now when I watch slapstick comedies with my children, I acknowledge their intelligence by saying, "I know you understand that this isn't real." Then I ask "what if" questions, such as, "What if a real anvil fell on the coyote?" By using this strategy I engage my children in a dialogue about the consequences of violent actions, increase their sensitivity, and encourage them to think of nonviolent alternatives.

To understand the final key concept, "All TV programs have an underlying economic purpose," we watched TV commercials specifically aimed at children. As we viewed the commercials, we asked ourselves what they did to appeal to children and what makes them want products.

I'm sure you've experienced the "buy me that" syndrome with your children after they've seen products advertised on TV. I've found there are several effective antidotes to treat this situation. First, I explain how camera angles and special effects make products appear larger than their actual size. I define phrases like, "sold separately," "some assembly required," and "part of a nutritious breakfast." The most effective method of exposing advertising "tricks" I've found is a field trip to the store to examine the products.

Today, I can see the ways in which my family benefits from critical viewing and media literacy. My wife, Martha, and I select programs that we feel are developmentally appropriate for our children. With our older children, we often use news programs to facilitate discussion. I find this particularly valuable in helping our children feel comfortable and confident in expressing their views about contemporary issues, such as the O.J. Simpson trial and AIDS.

**In photo:
Martha and
Dennis Moriarty
with their children,
Liam,
Owen, and
Meggie (l-r).**



RECEIVED

NOV 7 1995

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

208 DE BUYS ROAD ■ P.O. BOX 4596 ■ BILOXI, MS 39535-4596 ■ (601) 896-1313

August 23, 1995

Mr. William F. Caton, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW - Room 222
Washington, DC 20554

RECEIVED

8/23/95

FCC MAIL ROOM

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

Dear Mr. Caton,

I am distressed to learn that the FCC is considering a change in the Children's Television Act that would add some quantity or quota factor to the act. Broadcasters throughout the country are making significant progress at providing programs for our children that serve their education and information needs.

Consider the following examples of both broadcast and non-broadcast efforts we have undertaken in a small market like Biloxi, Mississippi since the Children's Television Act was enacted:

VIEWPOINT YOUTH - A show dealing with teen issues like racism, drug abuse and violence. The show is researched, planned and produced with the aid of our station sponsored Boy Scouts of American Explorer Post. The WLOX-TV Explorer Post meets throughout the school year with WLOX advisors to plan and produce "Viewpoint Youth." Not only is this program geared toward teens, but it allows our Explorer teens hands-on educational experience in the field of broadcasting.

KALEIDOSCOPE KIDS - On the show we take local school kids on educational adventures and explore places like wilderness islands, our local space center and oceanariums...just to list a few. Among other things, we have learned about marine debris, nature and space exploration. Under the "Kaleidoscope Kids" umbrella we also broadcast puppet shows which educate kids about cultural differences, drug and alcohol abuse and divorce. Along with each of these programs, we also provide worksheets for local educators to use in their classrooms

GET A CLUE - In addition to these locally produced programs, we are working with our seven "sister" stations in our Cosmos Broadcasting family to produce an educational children's show called "Get A Clue." In just a few short weeks we will broadcast our first show which teaches children about ship navigation by taking them on a scavenger hunt that is all linked to their local library, computers and a mythical pirate. Here, too, a worksheet will be provided to our local educators to enhance the learning experience for our community's children.

WLOX-TV NEWS GAME - Locally we provide incentives to educate school children about current events. We publish and distribute a news game to all schools in our viewing area on a weekly basis during the school year. Teachers use our news game to educate their students about the community and the world.

CHILDREN FIRST - We also participate and provide local segments for an ABC program called "Children First." The latest program is a summer science show which teaches kids about weather and earthquakes. Our local segment deals with one of our most serious weather concerns in South Mississippi...hurricanes.

KIDS VOTING USA - WLOX-TV is also part of a non-profit organization called "Kids Voting USA." It is a program that educates the children in our community about the importance of voting by actually letting them vote at the polls with their parents on election day. In preparation for that mock vote, teachers are provided a lesson plan by "Kids Voting USA." We also have a station representative who speaks in the schools and helps educate school children about the voting process. The station also sponsors and runs one of the Kids Voting precincts on election day. In addition, one of our teen journalists from our Explorer Post reports on the Kids Vote throughout our election coverage. These news reports are directly aimed at our young viewers.

SHOWCASE FOR KIDS AND FAMILY - This event is held at our local coliseum and involves 40 to 50 exhibitors who share educational information with children and their parents.

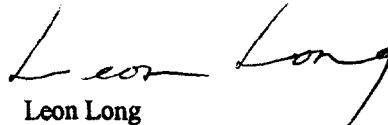
The programs we have offered as examples are just a few of the efforts we are making for the children of our area. These programs are not hidden in obscure time periods, but are televised in prime time or other high viewing dayparts.

As well as all of our locally produced programming, we also broadcast syndicated children's programming like "Nick News" and Disney's "Bill Nye The Science Guy." And, we broadcast a number of public service announcements geared specifically for children.

I hope you will agree that our efforts to reach and educate the children in our community reflect what is happening in the television industry. We don't need more regulations to tell us what or how much to broadcast for our young viewers. We are providing a variety of educational children's programming on our own. We understand the current definition of educational and informational children's programming and are meeting that challenge with enthusiasm!

Think of how well this act is working before you change to a system that measures only the bulk of product and does not recognize the quality or relevance of the effort. Stations like WLOX-TV are making a significant and effective contribution to our children and we request that you not change that which is working.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leon Long". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Leon" and last name "Long" clearly distinguishable.

Leon Long
Vice President and General Manager

ccf

xc: FCC - Mr. Reed Hundt, Chairman
Mr. James Quello, Commissioner
Mr. Andrew Barrett, Commissioner
Ms. Susan Ness, Commissioner
Ms. Rachelle Chong, Commissioner

MMB

6202

VIDEO SERVICES
DIVISION

Mitch Ritter

~~20000 Hunt Street~~ Berkeley, California 94704

510.849.2605

AUG 28 8 33 AM '95

Mr. Reed Hunt, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street NW
Washington DC 20510

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DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

August 9, 1995

NOV 7 1995

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

Dear Mr. Hunt,

How refreshing to hear someone in Washington mention the 'public interest.' I am not so naive as to equate this with acting in the public interest, but at least we have the rhetoric we can hold you to. As a member of a fast forming Bay Airwave Auditors Group (modeled after the Ralph Nader inspired Citizen Utility Boards) I am writing to express alarm at the antitrust implications of the radical telecomm bill which just passed the House with barely any analysis in the market driven media. We have begun petitioning our senators, but speaking for many of us in the watchdog group there is a feeling that only captains of industry and interpreters of speculation have access to legislators. It is in this spirit that I am enclosing a feature/review of a recently published book entitled NETWORKS OF POWER: CORPORATE TV'S THREAT TO DEMOCRACY by former ABC children's programming producer and 4 time Emmy winner Dennis Mazzocco (South End Press, Boston, MA).

Listening to your talk at the National Press Club aired over NPR this evening I bristled when I heard you discuss the networks' lip service regarding past pledges to provide childrens' programming. Mr. Mazzocco provides startling insider accounts of just how cynically corporate levels at ABC/Capital Cities acted in axing their childrens' programming division once President Reagan signalled that deregulation was coming. The fact that Capital Cities founding investor William Casey, then a member of Reagan's cabinet as CIA Director (a whole other can of worms) helped his company get the necessary regulatory approval for the transaction, and then was allowed to keep his stocks in ABC close to his vest (not in a blind trust) shows us the difference between spouting phrases like 'public interest,' and acting in good faith as a 'public servant.' I hope you will pay special


2. Letter to FCC Chairman Reed Hunt continued:

airwaves' into the public's hands, taking them back from rootless global media cartels and nuclear weapons manufacturers (GE being one convicted of fraud against the U.S. government in its contracts).

It has been most instructive to hear Mazzocco over a number of syndicated radio chat shows fielding calls from interested citizens spanning the conventionally drawn political spectrum from far right (the government as the Great Satan) to the far left (vertically integrated corporations cast as The Beast). It would appear that the built in contradictions of the prevailing conventional wisdom that markets should rule in every sector of society even as market forces doom Family and Traditional Values has created a massive grassroots shift away from the institutional dogma. The rapaciousness and malevolent effects of unregulated markets is quite clearly transforming the first world into a third world bazaar. Listening to Mazzocco's appearances on call in radio I noticed many mothers from upwardly mobile communities phoning in pumping the author for specific community strategies for taking back the airwaves. An unexpected number of corporate types would phone in and wind up being most receptive to Mazzocco's recommendations. Even the militia types sounded like they supported checks on corporate consolidation. This is a potentially massive front, perhaps a volatile force if the corporate-government nexus proceeds apace.

Thank you for your time and attention. I look forward to your considered reply to the enclosed article written for THE DAILY TEXAN in Austin (to be reprinted in NATIONAL ALTERNATIVE PRESS REVIEW) on the issues raised by Dennis Mazzocco in NETWORKS OF POWER: CORPORATE TV'S THREAT TO DEMOCRACY.

Respectfully,


Mitch Ritter

PS - I did not choose the moronic headline used in the advertiser supplement to the special midterm edition, but it does reflect some intuition on the part of the J-School editors in Texas since the Information Highway currently seems to be up for auction by legislators cutting backroom

Tuesday, May 9, 1995

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TUESDAY, MAY 9, 1995

to The Daily Texan at The University of Texas at Austin

the world went wrong, who might control the infobahn?

author Dennis Mazzocco, fresh from 'the belly of the broadcasting beast,' thinks he might know. His research offers non-telegenic answers

Emmy award-winning former ABC-TV and NBC-TV production executive Dennis Mazzocco has emerged from the belly of the broadcasting beast, and after tempering his first-hand experiences with research in academe, he has presented a multi-dimensional look at the grids that bind us. Choosing his title with great care, and a prescient eye toward history befitting itself in the substantive vacuum attending our national non-debate over who will control the information Highway — and at what cost — Mazzocco's *Networks of Power* traces our current dysfunctional polity to the during old boys' networks of monopolists, financiers, revolving door politicians, regulators, intelligence and National Security privateers.

Focusing on the 1985 takeover of this former employer, ABC Inc., by a media holding company whose founders illustrate the tale of "wealth, privilege and social conons" that characterizes membership in global media cartel, Mazzocco reminds us of the counterintuitive truism lying at the heart of the myth of a Free Market System.

Capital Cities, with a quarter of the annual revenues of ABC, required the support of the highest government and financial powers to both finance and gain regulatory approval for the \$3.5 billion takeover. At the time, Capital Cities/ABC represented the largest non-oil merger in U.S. history.

It doesn't take Journalism 101 to recognize the significance of such an event. Yet, Mazzocco is able to demonstrate how attention to the principals of this historic transaction was systematically diverted.

"When the media system did not report to the majority of the citizenry about the inside corporate history and elite business ownership of both Capital Cities and ABC before the takeover, that was not the result of conspiracy or cabal. Rather, the lack of candor reflected the altered interests of corporate elites who acted to protect their firm's power, privileges and profits."

Mazzocco's lineage in distinguishing corporate policy from nefarious conspiracy, and antitrust cartels from omnipotent cabals, helps to raise the central issue of his disturbing researches. Where does public interest figure into the ceding of limited national resources to increasingly concentrated and ever less regulated transnational conglomerates? Is public interest even a relevant term within the narrow parameters of unfettered pursuit of private profit represented by our exclusively market-driven media system?

It is chilling to ponder these questions from the perspective of at least one major principal in the Capital Cities takeover of ABC Inc., President Reagan's campaign manager (remember President Carter's stolen debate briefing book?) and later CIA Director William Casey, a.k.a. "The Cyclone," and "The

Polar." Casey became an investor and partner in Capital Cities in 1964.

Mazzocco, citing the excellent biography of this pivotal Iran-Contra figure by Joseph Persico (Viking Press, 1990), notes that as

ing in 1957, Casey gobbled up a block of 51,000 shares at 13 cents per share. When he became director of the CIA, Casey refused to place his holdings into a blind trust. After pressuring the FCC to revoke ABC's TV and radio licenses in 1984 in retaliation for the network's airing of a news report citing CIA involvement in an assassination attempt on an American citizen (where's the Guatemala file when you need it?) Capital Cities made its first offer to buy ABC.

A month later, the mass media giant, able in the past to fight takeover attempts by such transnational predators as ITT (engineers of the early 1970s Chilean coup which toppled popularly elected President Salvador Allende, and installed U.S. proxy General Pinochet) fell to a low-profile consortium of former media regulators, policy makers, and Casey, who held 34,000 shares when the Capital Cities/ABC merger took place, bringing him over \$7 million, or as Persico reports, his 13 cents per share appreciated in value to \$215 per share. Compared to the media scrutiny of Hillary Clinton's nickel-and-dime commodities trading, not much fuss was made in the national media over Casey's windfall.

While it was discussed and vilified in the marginalized independent (often tagged as leftist) media, there was no analysis to be found over ABC, or its so-called competitors NBC, CBS or the too-leftist-for-Bob-

Dole-and-David-Horowitz PBS.

While a section of Mazzocco's book following other large media mergers reads a bit like the begets of the Old Testament, his final chapter entitled "Making media more democratic" offers the kind of hopeful guidance associated with the New and Improved Testament. Mazzocco advocates the formation of community media councils modeled after Ralph Nader inspired organizations such as the Citizen Utility Boards, or CUBs. "The most successful Citizen Utility Board (in Illinois) has 170,000 members and its advocacy has saved the state's consumers some \$2 billion over the past several years."

Countering the prevailing Capital Cities/ABC syndicated talk radio currents, which garner popularity by blaming government, and shielding Big Business from citizens' claims on their civic responsibilities, Mazzocco proposes taxing network advertisers as well as charging these corporate privatizers of the public airwaves, and notorious downsizeers of local labor to support a parallel, non-commercial broadcast system.

"For instance, just one percent of all 1990-91 monies earned, or spent, on U.S. advertising or U.S. media conglomerates that produce information and cultural products would generate an annual fund of an approximate \$1.2 billion that could be used to establish and maintain a viable alternative media in the United States."

The effects on the current plutocratic political campaign system would be radical, and perhaps ideas and plans would supplant dollars and access as electoral currency.

Mazzocco authors a valuable synthesis with secondary sources of journalistic and academic media criticism from the likes of whom you'll never find in Ted Koppel's or Charlie Rose's Golden Rolodex (e.g. Patricia Aufderheide, Erik Barnouw, Noam Chomsky, Edward Herman, Michael Parenti, Susan B. Trento, etc.).

His specifications for a mixed media system deserve more attention. The author insists on the private and public spheres balancing each other's innate tendencies toward corruption. *Networks of Power* is a key primer for anyone wishing to enter the discussion on inevitable mass communications reform.

NETWORKS OF POWER

BY DENNIS W. MAZZOCCO

FOREWORD BY HERBERT SCHILLER

Capital Cities' adviser on tax matters, Casey's "financial craftiness" resulted in Capital Cities not having to pay any taxes through 1960, "nearly six years after its first broadcast."

In Capital Cities' first public stock offer-